

In the Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended) A blood-free plasma expander and blood substitute for use in a subject in need thereof, comprising ~~a solution of alpha-keratose dissolved in a physiologically balanced electrolyte solution~~.

Claim 2 (currently amended) The blood free plasma expander and blood substitute according to Claim 1 wherein the ~~solvent physiologically balanced electrolyte solution is selected~~ from the group consisting of sterile water, sterile saline, mixed salts solution, ~~and~~ sterile dextrose and mixtures thereof.

Claim 3 (currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition useful as a blood plasma expander and blood substitute comprising a therapeutically effective amount of ~~a solution of alpha-keratose dissolved in a physiologically balanced electrolyte solution~~.

Claims 4-8 (cancelled)

Claims 9-20 (withdrawn)